

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 0989

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY) GW, WB
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S BERLIN TRIP: TEMPELHOF VS. TEGEL

REF: BONN 07634

1. TEMPELHOF HAS SOME REAL ADVANTAGES OVER TEGEL AS AN ARRIVAL POINT IN BERLIN, ESPECIALLY FOR AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT, AND I RECOMMEND STRONGLY THAT THIS POSSIBILITY BE CONSIDERED AS TRIP PLANNING GETS UNDER WAY. FROM A GENERAL SECURITY AND CROWD-HANDLING POINT OF VIEW, TEMPELHOF IS FAR SUPERIOR, SINCE IT IS A USAF BASE, IN OUR SECTOR OF CITY AND HENCE UNDER COMPLETE UNITED STATES CONTROL. SINCE IT IS NO LONGER USED FOR NOMRAL CIVILIAN AIR OPERATIONS, IT IS TOTALLY OPEN AND AVAILABLE FOR SETTING UP PROPER WELCOMING AND DEPARTURE ARRANGEMENTS IN WAY THAT BUSY DUAL-PURPOSE TEGEL OBVIOUSLY CANNOT BE. MOST IMPORTANT, HOWEVER INTANGIBLE, IS FACT THAT IT WAS AT TEMPELHOF THAT BERLIN-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP AND TIES WERE REALLY FORGED, IN HARD TIMES OF 1948-1949, THERE IS WIDESPREAD UNDERSTANDING OF THAT HISTORIC FACT IN BERLIN, AND FOR PRESIDENT CARTER TO LAND THERE WOULD HAVE ENORMOUS SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE TO BERLINERS.

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2. DISADVANTAGE OF TEMPELHOF IS OF COURSE THAT TEGEL HAS SOMEWHAT LONGER RUNWAYS. BUT ON BASIS DISCUSSIONS WITH BASE COMMANDER AND OTHERSKNOWLEDGEABLE HERE, I BELIEVE TEMPELHOF WOULD BE ENTIRELY SAFE FOR LIGHT-LOADED LARGE AIRCRAFT LIKE 707. SINCE PRESIDENT WOULD BE MAKING ONLY SHORT JUMP FROM NUERNBERG TO BERLIN, SOMETHING LESS THAN FULL GAS LOAD WOULD SEEM

TO ME TO GIVE FULLY SATISFACTORY FLIGHT SAFETY MARGIN.
THIS QUESTION WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED BY
THOSE COMPETENT MAKE SUCH TECHNICAL DECISIONS, BUT
I URGE THAT REALLY HARD LOOK BE TAKEN AT THE TEMPELHOF
ALTERNATIVE RATHER THAN JUST MAKE ROUTINE ASSUMPTION
THAT TEGEL IS TO BE USED. GEORGE

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